



Courage & Conviction

# newsfront

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## Beleaguered

### Koirala to quit once successor issue is settled

■ nf correspondent

The downside is complete. From a national hero to South Asia's legend, GP Koirala is now counting his days since the prime minister is now looking for a dignified exit in the backdrop of his failure to hold elections to the constituent assembly as scheduled in November. He may be quitting any moment now.

Koirala made what appeared like his last political wish when Maoist leader Prachanda and Baburam, UML Secretary General Madhav Kumar Nepal and Congress leader Sher Bahadur Deuba met him separately on Sunday. He asked them to look for an acceptable way to find his successor, although he did not make it clear whether he will quit before the special session of parliament summoned on October 11 or face it as the prime minister.

Informed sources said that Koirala was no longer keen to continue in the post after his failure, but wanted that the choice of his successor should take place through a consensus among the coalition partners as the seven party unity was crucial to the peace process and future of democracy in Nepal. There are however, indications of serious tussles likely for the race to the chair of the prime minister with Ram Chandra Poudel, Sushil Koirala and Sher Bahadur Deuba from the Congress party, and Madhav Kumar Nepal from the UML as the likely contenders.

Although there were fears that Koirala could make any compromises to stick to the chair, he said he understood the rationale behind the demand for his head after his failure to conduct the polls. UML has already asked Koirala to own the moral responsibility and quit. "He must quit now," said education minister and UML's central secretariat member.

Like UML, some central committee members of the Congress party like Narahari Acharya, Madheshi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) and National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NFIN) have asked Koirala to quit, and no one from his party has come forward to save him.

Koirala still had the option of accepting Maoists' demand for declaring Nepal a republic, becoming

its first president and going for proportional representation system, but there was absolute majority against it during informal consultation among the members of the central committee of the Nepali Congress. Like UML, some central committee members of the Congress party like Narahari Acharya, Madheshi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) and National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NFIN) asked Koirala to quit.

In fact, Koirala had confided in some of the Nepali Congress ministers on October 4 that he should quit simultaneously after the announcement to annul polls are made public on moral grounds, but he was advised against it by two senior ministers, Ram Sharan Mahat and Ram Chandra Poudel, a Congress leader told newsfront. "But he has made up his mind after Koirala was told clearly both by Madhav Nepal and Prachanda separately on Sunday that his leadership would no longer be acceptable to them any more." ■



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More than 6 thousand people participated in the NRN- Springwood Marathon in the capital on Oct 6. The event was organised to encourage tourists to come to Nepal.

## Outside concern

Mukherjee in Delhi, international community for peace

Annulment of the election process in Nepal has come as a disappointment for the international community which has so much at stake here in Nepal. The disappointed reactions have come from the UN secretary general to EU, but there seems to be an element of sadness at personal level for Indian ambassador Shiv Mukherjee.

Mukherjee who is waiting for a more lucrative posting any time, most likely in London, was on an extended tenure as he wanted to be around during the elections in November. Sad about the postponement of the election, he is now in Delhi, ostensibly for medical treatment, but clearly to brief his bosses, Shiv Shanker Menon and Pranab Mukherjee as well. Mukherjee, only about a month ago, had stated that no excuse would be acceptable for not holding the polls on November 22.

On Mukherjee's advice, ambassadors from China, United Kingdom



and the United States had met PM Koirala separately only four days before the polls were cancelled. All of them came back satisfied that elections would not be postponed. "In fact, based on Koirala's assurance, reports were sent to the headquarters stating that the government was determined to hold the polls on time," a diplomat told newsfront.

While Delhi has officially suggested that frequent postponement of the

polls would bring into question the legitimacy of the political system, many Nepal politicians claiming proximity with Delhi say Ambassador Mukherjee has advised the PM and other prominent leaders 'at his personal capacity' that parliament should declare Nepal a republic when it meets next week.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, the United States of America, European Union and the Carter Center have expressed their disappointment over the postponement of the polls, and asked key players to take the peace process forward. The Carter Center, like many other international bodies, was in the process of dispatching many election observers to Nepal for the November 22 polls. Its Chief, Jimmy Carter was also expected in the capital sometimes in November to supervise the final preparation of the polls.

## Twice 'incompetent'

Koirala defaults on election pledge

■ nf correspondent

Prime Minister G P Koirala failed to keep his promise to the nation as the November 22 election to the constituent assembly was called off. And this was when the election commission was making all the preparations to accept the list of party nominees under the proportional representation system, on October 5.

There were some representatives of smaller parties with their headquarters outside the capital who were waiting to submit the list to the commission as October 5 was the deadline. Chief Election Commissioner Bhojraj Pokharel had assured them that he would start accepting their list if he did not hear anything by ten in the morning from the government. At 9.30, he got a request from the cabinet that the electoral process was being annulled.

All that the commission did after that was to issue a press statement officially intimating that election process was over despite it being fully prepared to conduct the polls. "Our being fully prepared for the poll alone was not sufficient", it said, implying that it was the government which was entirely at fault. This was the second time that the elections were put off at the last moment, earlier being in June.

Koirala has suddenly acquired the image of a political defaulter, both at home and abroad, with his coalition partners asking him to step down. His biggest embarrassment proved to be the newspaper headline on October 5 in which he was attributed to



having assured a visiting Finnish Minister that elections would not be deferred under any circumstances. The government decision came when the minister was still here assuring the election commission that the Finnish government was ready to extend all its support to conduct free and fair polls.

The annulment of the election process at the last minute has raised questions about Koirala's leadership. The election was called off as the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists (CPN-M) insisted that they would let it happen on schedule only if the GP Koirala led coalition partners agree to declare Nepal a 'Republic' and go for proportional system of election instead of the earlier agreed mixed system.

Koirala refused to accept these demands in full or in part saying it was too late. Congress party sources said what bewildered them the most was that Koirala kept insisting that elections would take place come what may. He had repeatedly said publicly in the past that he would quit if he could not hold the elections on time.

## Coup vs coup

Coterie asks PM to sack top security officials

■ nf correspondent

In what appears like a desperate move to rule the country through loyal army and police, Prime Minister G P Koirala's loyal coterie is putting pressure on him to sack some key security officials, including the chief of army and the chief of Nepal police.

A prominent source in Baluwatar told newsfront that the PM chided them not to indulge in silly experiments. At least three prominent Congress leaders, despite their internal rift, have advised Koirala to sack Army Chief Rukmangat Katawal and the Nepal Police Chief Om Bikram Rana, and have his loyalists appointed in their place if he was serious about thwarting what they said an 'imminent coup'. They also advised him to appoint Kul Bahadur Khadka, a three star general and next in line of succes-

sion, as chief of the army to insulate the top level from 'royalists'.

The armed police chief has not come into controversy currently as its head, Basudev Oli, is the Home Minister Sitaula's cousin, and he has time and again said he is loyal to 'democracy.' The latest development comes in the background of King Gyanendra going to the Kumari temple on September 30, minutes after Koirala took Prasad from the living Goddess in the capacity of the Head of the State. Koirala came back home furious after the people there shouted slogans against him.

Sources in Baluwatar said Koirala felt it was too late to go for this drastic action although he has of late been complaining that the army has not been cooperating with him. Those seeking the ouster of the army chief, sources said, now includes PM's

daughter, Sujata Koirala, who of late has turned into a pro-republican changing her earlier stance that this country will move towards disintegration without monarchy in some form.

Army headquarters refused to comment on the issue except saying, "there are lots of rumours floating around. We know that certain anti-democratic forces were quite disturbed about Nepal army's solid backing for pro-democracy forces."

But there are clear signals of embittered relationship between Koirala and Katawal as the latter asked the former to recognise King Gyanendra's right to religion and not to corner him too much at Maoists' behest. Katawal is also understood to have told Koirala that he (Katawal) has been pacifying the army despite all provocations by some of PM's ministers and parliamentarians repeatedly.

## The path and its fruit - Lamdre

His Holiness Jigdal Dagchen Sakya, leader of the Khon lineage of the Sakya order of Tibetan Buddhism has been bestowing Lamdre, the central Sakya teaching and the original Sakya Khon lineage transmission to Buddhist practitioners at Tharlam Monastery, Boudha, Kathmandu since 2nd Oct. His Holiness has bestowed the teaching only four times previously, and for the second time in Kathmandu after 16 years.

First revealed to the Indian Buddhist master Virupa in the seventh century, the Lamdre passed on from teacher to student in a lineage that reached Tibet and became the speciality of the Sakya order; and is considered the ambrosia of the Sakyas. It contains two sections: the triple vision with Sutrayana topics and Mahayana practices; and the triple continuum that is intended to bring about total transformation of mind.

Dagchen Rinpoche was born into the Phuntsok branch of the Khon lineage in Sakya, Tibet in 1929. He studied Buddhism with his father, Trichen Ngawang Thutop Wangchuk



from whom he received the unbroken Khon lineage transmissions. He also studied in depth with two of this century's greatest masters: Sakya non-sectarian Dzongsar Khyentse Jamyang Chokyi Lodro and Nyingma non-sectarian Dilgo Khyentse Rabsel Dawa Rinpoche.

Dagchen Rinpoche has for over 30 years taught the Buddhadharm in the USA, Europe and Asia. By conferring this precious Lamdre transmission outside Tibet, the Rinpoche is happy to be able to reach disciples from all Tibetan traditions and from countries around the world. The teaching at Boudha will conclude on 2nd Nov, 07.



## Newsbrief

## Finally, Giri is the CJ

After dilly dallying for around a month, GP Koirala in his capacity as the 'head of the state' appointed Kedar Prasad Giri as the Chief Justice of Nepal. This puts at rest the uncertainty over the absence of leadership in the apex court. Justice Giri was officiating as the CJ ever since Dilip Kumar Poudel retired from the post on September 7.



Giri's elevation comes in the wake of division among the members of the special committee of parliament on party lines. Koirala sort of exercised his 'special powers' to appoint Giri as the CJ. In a similar case, he had earlier appointed Sailaja Acharya as the ambassador to Delhi although the parliamentary committee lacked consensus on Sailaja being chosen.

Koirala had come in for sharp criticism, mainly from the bar, for not filling up the top post in the judiciary as it left enough ground to lobby on behalf of those aspiring to be CJ at the cost of seniority.

## Still mighty Koirala

Friday, October 5, might have been a day of defeat for GP Koirala since he failed to keep his promise to hold elections to the constituent assembly. But he also had a reason to feel happy as he could prove that his words carry weight at least on affairs related with Narayanhiti royal palace.



Army Chief Rukmangad Katawal removed about 800 cavalries on duty from the palace, and brought them under command of the army headquarters. He acted on orders of the prime minister who lost his cool, if not balance, when people booed him during his state visit to the Kumari temple on September 30 and hailed King Gyanendra who had gone there as an ordinary pilgrim.

## Seasonal Sujata

It seems Kumari, the living goddess showered blessing on G P Koirala if her daughter's belated shift to the pro-republican issue is an indicator of that. A day after Koirala visited Kumari temple, Sujata called on her father to confess that she was wrong in supporting the monarchy earlier.

As the elder Koirala was chatting with some Congress leaders, a visibly elated daughter admitted that the king was the source of all problems. She said it loudly that the way the king went to the Kumari temple without informing 'Sanobuba' was an ample proof that king will always be the destabilising factor in Nepal's politics. Sujata's political somersault comes less than a fortnight after she made public speeches that monarchy is needed to save the country from disintegration and that B P Koirala's policy of national reconciliation was relevant even today.

## Air travel up

With peace process on track, there has been 27 per cent growth in the number of foreign tourists visiting Nepal in September. According to the data available from the Immigration Office, at the Tribhuvan International Airport, the number of tourists arriving was up by 6847 compared to the corresponding month last year. This is in conformity with the total increase of 32.3 per cent, in the number of tourists flying in Nepal during the past nine months. According to the official data, a total of 252407 tourists came to Nepal during the period.

Despite the travel advisory issued by the U S government, there was a 38.9 per cent increase in the number of tourists visiting Nepal compared to last year. The highest increase, 49.1 per cent, indicated that Nepal remains a favoured destination of Spanish tourists. There was 33.6 per cent increase in the number of tourists from Italy, followed by 32.1 per cent (British), 29 per cent (Japanese), 25.2 per cent (Germans) and 18.6 per cent (French) tourists.

## Carlsberg in new bottle

Gorkha Brewery Pvt. Ltd has launched Carlsberg Beer in embossed 650ml bottles. The original Carlsberg bottle has been redesigned in an elegant form. With the brand name uniquely embossed down the side, the new bottle is easy to hold. The bottle is transparent making it easy to appreciate the classic quality of Carlsberg.

Carlsberg has a strong association with international football with its sponsorships of Liverpool Football club in England, Carlsberg Manang Marshyangdi Club in Nepal and UEFA European Championship. Carlsberg being the official beer of UEFA Euro 2008 championship to be held in 2008 in Austria and Switzerland, the logo of EUFA Euro 2008 appears on the top of the neck label of the new bottle.



## Badal factor

Nationalism a big issue in Maoist politics today.

There has been a sudden spurt of debate over nationalism, and the need to protect it, in course of debate in the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) party now. Party spokesperson, KB Mahara, solicited media's key role in defense of nationalism in a brief chat with journalists on October 4.

An intense debate in CPN-M has influential members demanding that the party maintain a cordial ideological relationship with the northern neighbour instead of depending too much on the 'South'. That line also is in favour of building better understanding with the nationalist forces within Nepal. The debate has taken a firm shape after PM GP Koirala's recent statement that Nepal's sovereignty was under threat. Although he did not mention India's name, everyone who heard Koirala, said it was clear which country he was referring to.

The sudden focus on nationalism from the Maoists comes in the wake of strident criticism of the Maoists by most of the political parties holding the rebels of yesterdays solely guilty for derailing the electoral and democratic process. In the assessment of the ruling coalition partners, Maoists ostensibly put forward the demand for republicanism and the proportional representation system at



the last moment to derail this process. Some of the partners, mainly the Congress leaders, also see that Maoist party's influential group backed by Vaidya-Gajurel and Badal of late seem to favour proportional representation more than the demand to abolish monarchy.

A prominent Congress party leader involved in the negotiation process revealed that Ram Bahadur Thapa alias Badal, went to the extent of telling the meeting in Baluwatar on 4th October that the Maoists were interested more on proportional representation and not so much on the republican issue. "That killed the possible consensus," the Congress source said, adding that KP Sitaula and Shekhar Koirala, the eyes and ears of the PM, were making every effort to

convince him that parliament should declare Nepal a republic now, but Badal's assertion that they were more interested in proportional representation changed the whole thing.

Sources said Shekhar and Sitaula even quoted Indian ambassador as having endorsed the republican line categorically; much against the spirit of the official reaction from the South block which favoured people taking major decision through election instead of the existing parliament doing it.

The recent debate on nationalism in the Maoist party appears as an assertion that 'republican and proportional representation electoral system' are entirely domestic issues which should be settled through internal debate and understanding. Badal's latest stance also comes as a major departure from Prachanda - Baburam line's proximity with that of Shekhar and Sitaula. Prachanda and Baburam have come in for sharp criticism within the party for having allegedly moved too close to India.

Apart from a dominating view within the Maoists now that, "we should not be guided too much by India," Badal is said to be angry with Sitaula after he turned towards the South seeking that Maoists be taught a lesson after it became clear that Maoists were not going to let the November 22 polls to take place.

SHIKHAR

SHIKHAR Filler Kings

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Point to Ponder

Tricks and treachery are the practice of fools, that don't have brains enough to be honest. I am a firm believer in the people. If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet national crisis. The great point is to bring them the real facts.

- Abraham Lincoln

Dishonesty

The ruling coalition led by Prime Minister GP Koirala, and the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists, another key actor in the peace process have once again proved how similar they are when it comes to letting people decide their fate and this country's future.

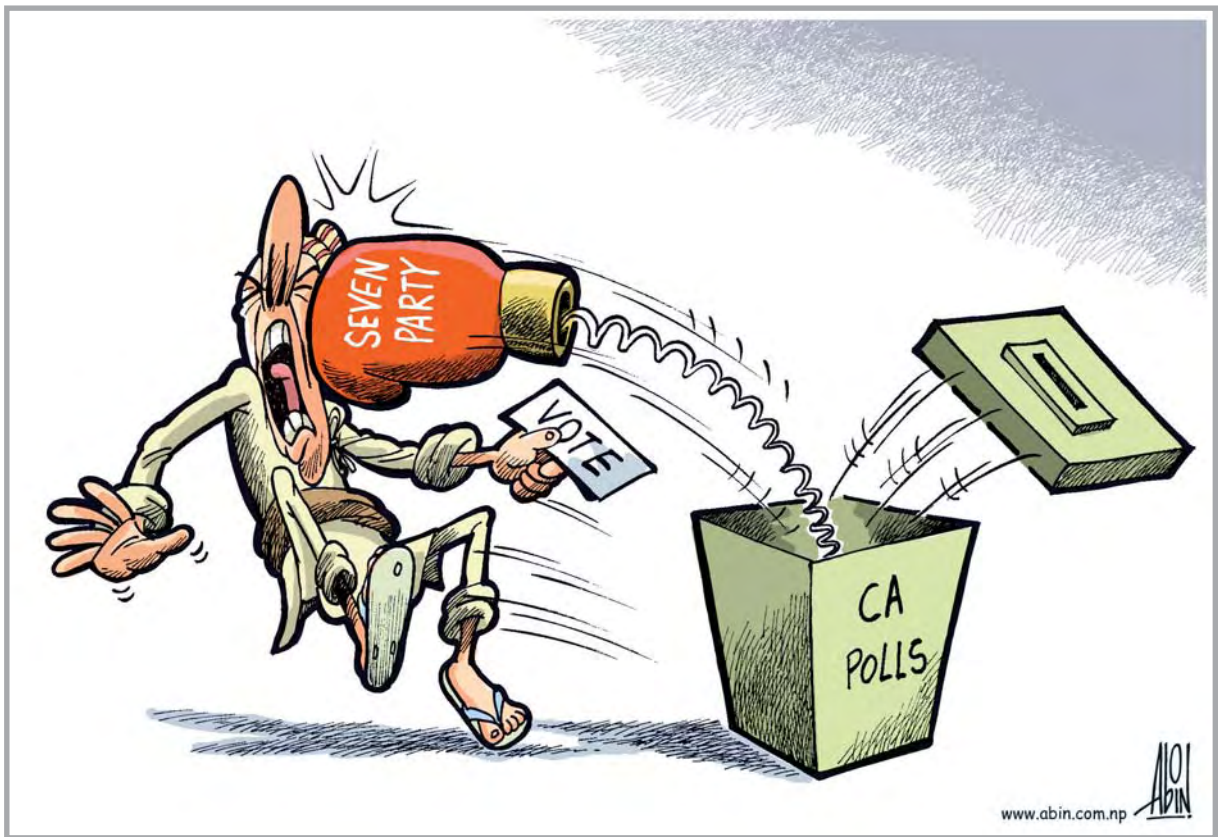
This is a shameful act and failure on the part of the PM Koirala. Congress leader Sher Bahadur Deuba paid the price as PM, albeit illegally, when he got sacked by the king for failing to hold parliament elections on schedule.

Koirala, of course, should own moral as well as administrative accountability for all this failure and quit. Maoists and other coalition partners have also acted ingloriously perhaps in varied degrees.

No matter how vigorously Maoists might deny it, they do not enjoy much esteem in people's perception. It will be taken as their running away from the elections. It is clearly an outcome of the 'deal based' politics that Koirala, with active collaboration of Prachanda pursued during the past 16 months of peace process, instead of taking other coalition partners and the people in confidence.

It was no doubt, a great victory for Nepalis to have Maoists on the peace process that made them realise that future history of this country cannot be written with human blood, but with collective wisdom and vision based on a policy of understanding and conciliation, and under a system where government and the elected parliament would be fully responsible to the sovereign people.

I am a firm believer in the people. If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet any national crises. The great point is to bring them the real facts.



Letters

Responsible journalism

The article "Terai problem and the media" (1st Oct) by Chandra Kishore Jha raised a very fundamental problem that should be taken positively. It highlights the lack of understanding on the part of the media personnel on issues they are writing about.

Media personnel have to possess knowledge of the elements of the society they write about. In order to sensitise them regarding the people, media houses should conduct occasional training and seminars for journalists.

It is also about time that media should focus more on news that sales. From what we come across in the media today, it is sex, scandal and sensation that go to make journalism.

It is imperative that reporting on Madhesh needs modification keeping in mind the heterogeneous character and composition of the society. Positive journalism will make a far better Madhesh than what we are seeing now.

Untrustworthy Koirala

Newsfront has been successful in breaking news one after the other. Its latest prediction on the front page news that G P Koirala is prone to any compromise in his state of confusion is quite worrying for the entire country.



Where does he want this country to go? Does he see Nepal beyond his days in the chair?

It is so amazing that the people who worshipped him only little more than a year ago are now fearing the worst in him. With his failure to hold the elections, Koirala must take the moral responsibility and quit to pave the way for worthy candidates for the post.

It is also a challenge for the Congress party leaders, especially the members of the parliament, to prove that they will not let their leader to take any major decision on behalf of the country anymore now that he has failed to honour his pledge to hold elections twice.

Bhavani Thapa Dilli Bazar, Kathmandu

Excellent pieces

Newsfront has made its mark in the media field in such a short span of its existence. Not only has it been giving space to various opinions and reflecting various dimensions of the contemporary Nepali society, it has also given space to culture and heritage.

Mukesh Shrestha Bhaktapur

Readers, your reactions, criticisms, comments, suggestions are most welcome. Please address it to: newsfront@bhrikuti.com

Spiritual Corner

Beyond fear and hatred

Aghor is a simple and natural state of consciousness. There is no place for feelings of fear, hatred, disgust or discrimination in the eyes of an Aghor. With constant practice when the soul is established in that state, such a person becomes an Avadhuta.

nature of the Guru. Bhagwan Ram is the 12th in the direct lineage of the twelve Aghoreshwar that began with Baba Kinaram from the 16th century. He renounced his body in November 1992.

In a conversation with one of his monks, Baba Bhagwan Ram gave the following description of an Aghor or a follower of Aghoreshwar: Followers of Aghoreshwar stay very far from doubt. They do not dwell in the body-mind. They dwell in the consciousness of self,



and with resolve they reach very substantial states. After they reach these states, they become so polite that their voices have nothing but sweetness. Their vocabulary has no place for defiling, provocative words, or words that spread enmity. Such words don't even arise. Whenever you come across such people, take them to be blessed by the Kapaleshwar (the great unknown who dwells in the cosmos, the spirit of Aghoreshwar). With unbreakable faith and reverence, they are moved by human

sufferings. The ascetics who are the followers of Aghoreshwar do not have any special appearance. They do not have any signs of class, caste or religion. They are continuously engaged in providing for the well-being of others, not discriminating any race, color or religion. To see an Aghor ascetic is like getting a glimpse of Shiva himself. In their greatness, they accept social relationships with everyone. They are not judgmental. They are for everyone and anyone just as the sun, the moon, the earth, fire and wind are not here for any particular religion, class, caste or nation.



# Loser's generosity

Koirala is now prone to making all kinds of compromises to save his chair.



■ Yubaraj Ghimire



A patient of depression and an insecure politician - especially the one in power, have one thing in common. Both see enemies everywhere, sometimes real but mostly imaginary. Prime Minister GP Koirala now shows all the qualities of an insecure politician. He has lost all the credentials of a confident leader that he once was.

With loss of that confidence and a series of failures to deliver, Koirala has now been frantically trying to find an enemy whom he can always lash out at without the perceived enemy being able to speak out in one's defense. Who could be more appropriate for this than King Gyanendra - isolated, humiliated and scared ever since he was forced to abandon his ambition to rule as an absolute king in April 2006 under the weight of a powerful mass movement?

Koirala has got his Home Minister, K P Sitaula, who is clearly above the law of parliamentary system of accountability - to furnish all details, real or unsubstantiated, about the role of the palace and pro-king forces in fanning out trouble in Kapilvastu and the explosions in Kathmandu. The PM who failed to book his home minister for all the failure in law and order situation and for a series of carnage will instead be using the 'conspiracy theory' of Sitaula as an excuse to sacrifice monarchy in his last ditch battle to save his own chair. Sitaula has proved his excellence in cooking up reports, and even influencing the judicial commission, in the manner he did with the Rayamajhi Commission.

The PM gave ample proof of his insecure mind on October 1 when he summoned Army Chief, Rukmangad Katawal at his Baluwatar residence. He was angry and felt insulted over the previous night's incident in Basantapur Durbar Square. Koirala, with Speaker Subhash Nembang on his side, was jeered at and booed by the mass for acting as a head of the state and for receiving 'Tika' from Kumari. He had ignored the public criticism that secular Nepal's government head should not be associating with any religion's rituals any more.

Koirala did not take people's anger and protest kindly. Instead, he questioned King Gyanendra's right to visit the Kumari temple to receive 'Prasad' in his individual capacity. In a feat of rage and response that was neither just nor humane, Koirala verbally ordered the army chief that half the army personnel deployed for king's security be immediately withdrawn. He behaved more like a medieval feudal chief, and not as the PM of a democratic country. He was further agitated when army chief Katawal told him in plain language that while the army would definitely follow each and every provision of the interim constitution and the comprehensive peace agreement, any hasty decision on the monarchy, clandestinely or in violation of the spirit of the two documents would not be acceptable to the army.

With November 22 elections put off indefinitely, Koirala is prone to making

all kinds of compromises to save his chair. There are enough speculations that India arranged a formula under which King Gyanendra would abdicate and go to exile along with his son Paras and Koirala would be the president of republic Nepal. News-reports which Himal magazine has carried however, suggest that the King stands firm that Nepal alone will be his abode under any circumstances.

Surely, Koirala has not kept the Nepali people informed about this move, but has he taken his coalition partners into confidence on this? Is the issue of monarchy a subject of secret deals between Koirala and other friendly countries, or should the Nepalis solely be deciding on the issue? This also shows the utter contempt Koirala has for the people of Nepal.

Despite King Gyanendra's unpopularity at its peak because of his unconstitutional and unreasonable political ambition, his refusal to leave the country shows he would rather have Nepalis to independently and conscientiously decide his fate. Koirala's unauthorised appropriation of the role of a king, and his harassing Gyanendra to the extent of denying him his right to religion could trigger anti-Koirala sentiment. After all, Nepali society will not approve anyone being denied the right to religion. That does not mean that the people would want to have an absolute monarch back onto centre-stage of Nepali politics, but they feel cheated and betrayed by the leaders of Koirala's ilk who become tyrants and undemocratic and are guided more by external forces while deciding on crucial internal issues.

Given Koirala's known bias to the extent of whipping hatred against monarchy which has been stripped of every right including self-defense; perhaps, it is now more appropriate to go for a referendum on the republican versus the monarchy issue, of course in constitutional or some other form. This is a vital issue where people cannot be deprived of their right to decide and leave it to the highly centralised political parties which are bent upon denying any role to the people in deciding country's future political course. Moreover, an acceptable electoral process requires level playing field in all fairness.

Koirala's series of failure to hold elections, second time in a year, should not be the ground for his elevation as the president. Nor should he be allowed at this stage to take a drastic decision like announcing republic Nepal from the parliament when the special session begins.

A defeated leader is prone to make more compromises. He should not be allowed to act like a political winner, and decide on issues of far reaching consequences on behalf of the nation or the people. It is also a lesson for the Maoists especially, and for others like UML to understand that what Nepalis are looking for is assertion of people's rights and power through electoral process, and not a gift of 'republicanism' from a PM who has lost the right, courage and authority to rule.



# Unknown soldiers

Future generations of Nepal should be presented with their own role models.

Nepal has remained a nation of soldiers than any other nation around the world ever since it agreed to support the British Empire's military might in its fight against known dictators in Europe and elsewhere. The sons of Nepal, mostly from hilly areas together with the Ranas, Thapas and other Kshatriyas (also from other caste now-a-days), have not only fought with remarkable courage but have also maintained near perfect discipline under military code of conduct for generations.

The number of VCs awarded to these brave soldiers during both the great wars I and II has proven that the Nepali soldiers belong to a distinct breed of people whose valor and sacrifice on duty is unmatched.

No wonder the United Nations, finding the Nepali contingent as one of the most reliable, disciplined and tactful, seems to be in the lookout for them. Nepali peace keeping contingents have been awarded several medals and accolades by the UN in their long illustrious service to the nations of the world.

Colonel Yogendra Shumsher JB Rana took part in the great Second World War by being assigned in Burma, now known as Myanmar, under the rule of Ranas. For being close to Rana Prime Minister Mohan Shumsher Rana, he was given a



■ Binod P Bista

**No wonder the UN, finding the Nepali contingent as one of the most reliable, disciplined and tactful, seems to be in the lookout for them.**

special privilege to engage in business as the Rana family members were prohibited from this profession then.

His journey in business started in his late teens with bicycle as his vehicle for reaching his customers, mostly in the valley. Through sheer determination and hard work (monopoly also helped) he was able to acquire a lot of wealth and prestige.

Popularly known as Kaju babushaheb, Col. Rana, became a name worth mentioning in the Nepali business circle, especially after the

1950s.

He was never found wanting for either ideas or guts. His respect for law and policy of lawful practices was astounding although he was blamed often for evading taxes in the importation of exempted goods to hotel industry. By himself he would never allow any action that might put him against the government.

He was always in favor of dealing with government agencies, wherever possible than commercial establishments, believing that the government can never act against the interest of businesses, and thus economic development. However, despite his hard work, he lost most of his agencies, hotel and had to spend his remaining days on his mortgaged land.

Kaju babushaheb passed away peacefully in the middle of September, 2007 after a full life of 97 years. He lived the life of a Nepali soldier all his life, disciplined and forthright. Those who knew him closely during his lifetime cannot help but admire his strength and courage that he showed.

He can readily be accepted as one of the pioneers of Nepali business with the outside world. Considering the state of most industrial and business houses today, which are sustained by agency business in bad times, Kaju babushaheb seems to have given



Colonel Yogendra Shumsher JB Rana

Nepali business an important lesson learned out of passion, hard work and keen sense of understanding of the future.

Nepal has housed several distinctive individuals over the century. Lacking political linkage and support, great deeds of these persons have been erased out and forgotten. One such person who went to heavenly journey recently at the age of 70 was Tarak Shumsher Thapa, the ace footballer of the time, who also established himself as a successful auditor in trying times.

Nepal now must learn to appreciate the work of every individual who excels in his/her profession. It would not be enough to simply copy Indian or Western idols and try to impress on the Nepali populace on some selected areas such as entertainment business. Future generations of Nepal should be presented with their own role models who have stood firm on their own soil and reached the heights of their profession with sheer determination, courage and ingenuity. The time has come to remember the unknown soldiers who have left an indelible mark for all of us to see. ■

Girija in pursuit of becoming contemporary Nepal's political hero is now on the path of being labeled as the country's most unsuccessful prime minister. Although he had been largely discredited, the king's takeover undoubtedly provided him with a hero's halo to champion the cause of democracy.

Unfortunately, as in the past GP Koirala has failed to deliver and his only motive to root the king out of power now becomes obvious – the passion to cling to power. It is indeed tragic to note that Koirala's ego matches the king's and both have enormously contributed to the political crisis prevailing in the country today. Neither of them wanted the other to succeed. Both want to seal their immortality in Nepali history by seen as solving country's key problems, through politics of one upmanship.

A prominent Congress leader on the condition of anonymity revealed that GP Koirala had met the Maoists at the Jain Temple in Naxal, just before the state of emergency was announced; while his colleague Sher Bahadur Deuba was the prime minister in 2001.

Koirala was point blank in conveying to the Maoists that, "ultimately you people would have to talk me," during his secret parley with the Maoists. That only shows what mattered to him the most in his power-driven politics. Unseating prime ministers and his attempt on the monarchy at any cost only

## Fallacies of two men

**It is embarrassing for us Nepalis to observe this grand spectacle where our leaders have shed their dignity and pride**



■ Siddhartha Thapa

reconfirm he has not changed.

Monarchy today is the unifying element or best serves as the punching bag for our politicians and civil society members. Therefore, if abruptly removed, there would be no threat to keep them united.

The real issues that plagues Nepal today is poverty, social exclusion, corruption and the consistent absence of a responsive government. Monarchy or a republic, in that sense is a non-issue. But Gyanendra helped propel this dogmatic propaganda of the Maoists by seizing absolute power in an attempt to sideline the democratic forces in the country.

The Maoists and the political parties have maintained that the monarchy is solely responsible for the deplorable condition of the people. However, these accusations are ill founded and any sociologists or a historian would conclude that it is the priestly clan who were responsible for enforcing caste laws and orthodox protocols that segregate a larger portion of the society, a fact ignored by all political parties so far.

Therefore, what Nepal really needs is a social, cultural and an economic revolution. Or better a new political revolution with a socio-economic and cultural reform package. The declaration of a republic from a nominated parliament will hold no relevance to that need.

Over the last year, adherence to the constitution has been ignored, therefore, should the Maoists run into confrontation at any time with the six parties, it is almost certain that monarchy will be brought back to life by six

parties as buffer against the Maoists.

The key really is the balance of power. The political parties want to retain power at any cost and for that reason, they can swing like a pendulum on either side of the political spectrum to forge alliances to stay in power.

Gyanendra as a commoner went to visit the Kumari, and that caused a sensation in the political circle. Girija's objection to that now begs the question, should the entire Nepali population seek permission from the prime minister to visit the Kumari? And does the move to downsize the number of armed forces in the palace help the peace process or did it better the prospect of elections happening? The real irony is that the parties who boast of minimising the king to a political non-entity continue to fear him. This fear and vulnerability goes to demonstrates how badly the parties have failed to materialise their promised dreams into reality.

In every sense it is embarrassing for us Nepalis to observe this grand spectacle where our leaders have shed their dignity and pride by making absurd political statements and comical observations to delude the people. Girija's decision to go to republic is not based on reasoning or political principles but merely on tactical moves to cling to power. Should the political equation change, so will his decision. Therefore, how long are we to suffer from politics of hatred, prejudice and vengeance? The continued tussle between the monarch and the democrats will only result in each eliminating the other out of the political equation. ■



# Highly disappointed

I do not see any alternative to election which I think, must happen at the earliest.

Chief Election Commissioner **Bhojraj Pokharel** is both worried and disappointed that the energy and effort his team put in to conduct elections to the constituent assembly has gone down the drain. Yet, he hopes that better sense will prevail among the political leaders so that people would get a chance at the earliest to decide on the future political course of this country through a peaceful and democratic process. Excerpts of the interview (his first one after the polls were called off) he gave to **Yubaraj Ghimire** and **Kiran Bhandari** for newsfront:

**What is your reaction to the CA elections being put off again?**

This is very unfortunate. This is a setback to the peace process as well. Nepalis were really looking forward to casting their ballots. They were of strong opinion that the elections would bring peace

that case, we just have to reschedule timings and the election programmes as per the new date.

However, if they change the electoral system fully or partially, that will require amendments in the constitution and new legislations have to be brought in. In that case, we need to review our preparations taking into account those new provisions. After all, those laws may affect voters, constituencies, process and will also directly affect the kind of preparations we need to make.

Based on those legislative requirements, we will have to design the rules, procedures, guidelines, form and format of the election. We also need to reorient polling staff and returning officers. We need to redesign voters' education, election messages, materials and the dissemination process. We need to know all these to be able to say how early we are ready to conduct the polls. But the main thing we need to

**Was it also not a huge waste of resources?**

Oh yes. A big chunk of resources has been wasted.

**Roughly, how much was wasted?**

It is enormous to say the least. I may not be able to tell you exactly in terms of its worth in monetary terms but it is huge. We owe an explanation to the people and we are compiling all those details. The kind of resources, technical assistance we got from the international community, all that was used and spent in training; we will bring it to the notice of the public.

**As you said you have no clear idea about when the elections will take place now, will the EC wait indefinitely?**

We are bound to limit our activities and response within the boundary set out by the constitutional provisions. We are waiting to hear from the government regarding the new election date as government is the sole authority to do that.

Since elections has been put off after certain political and electoral issues were raised, political parties need to address them legally and constitutionally; to pave the way for a smooth and unhindered poll process in future. It is for the parliament now how fast it can get into the legal and constitutional issues. I can only hope at the moment that they address them wisely. I am still hoping to hear the new election date from the government at the earliest.

**But what if polls keep getting put off or do not take place at all?**

I can only pray to God not to let that happen. I sincerely hope that the government and the political leaders rise to the occasion and do not fail the people who want peace process and democracy legitimised through election. I cannot say anything beyond this.

**Did you or the election commission consider quitting over postponement of the polls the second time in less than a year?**

You can understand our frustration but we need to make a sincere assessment of the situation. Our wanting to hold elections was not enough. But at the moment, what we can say is elections were not put off because of the failings on the part of the election commission. We would not have taken a minute to quit if we were found lacking in preparation in will and action. As a responsible institution, we need to respond to a situation with utmost seriousness and with a sense of responsibility, even at the cost of our self-pride some times. ■

**Big disappointment! For the past 11 months, we had been working as a team with a focused zeal to accomplish this national duty on time. We worked very hard. We did not want to fail the Nepali people and the international community.**

and stability in the country. They must be feeling very let down.

**Do you have any idea about the new date for the polls?**

Election is an important sub-system of a total or an integrated system. The total system at the moment is the peace process. Naturally, success of the process alone will lead to a credible election. So it is necessary that the process remains on track. But election is the only process that gives legitimacy to the peace process. Therefore, I do not see any alternative to election which I think, must happen at the earliest.

**As early as November?**

No. Elections in November is off and already ruled out now. We must now take into account the emerging scenario while talking about the new date. One of the fundamental issues we need to watch is how the political parties will respond to the existing provisions of the interim constitution related with the election system. They have to decide whether they want to continue with it.

If the parties decide they want to continue with the mixed system without any change, we can conduct the elections any time with the present preparation. In

know is what kind of election system we will adopt and how much of our earlier efforts can be re-applied.

**You had already dispatched many polling officers in the constituencies?**

We had established 240 offices of the returning officers and they all have been called back. As the entire process has been called off, the model code of conduct cease to be in operation now.

**What was the EC's first reaction when the government decision was formally communicated to you?**

Big disappointment! For the past 11 months, we had been working as a team with a focused zeal to accomplish this national duty on time. We worked very hard. We did not want to fail the Nepali people and the international community. We had successfully mobilised the entire electoral process and the people. We had nearly completed technical preparations. Ballot papers were getting ready and ballot boxes were in the process of being delivered to the booths.

**Was it a wasted effort?**

In a way, yes. But we also gained lots of experiences which I am sure will be useful when we actually conduct the polls. But now we need to regenerate ourselves for future delivery.



Bhaskar Ojha





■ Sanchita Sinha Roy

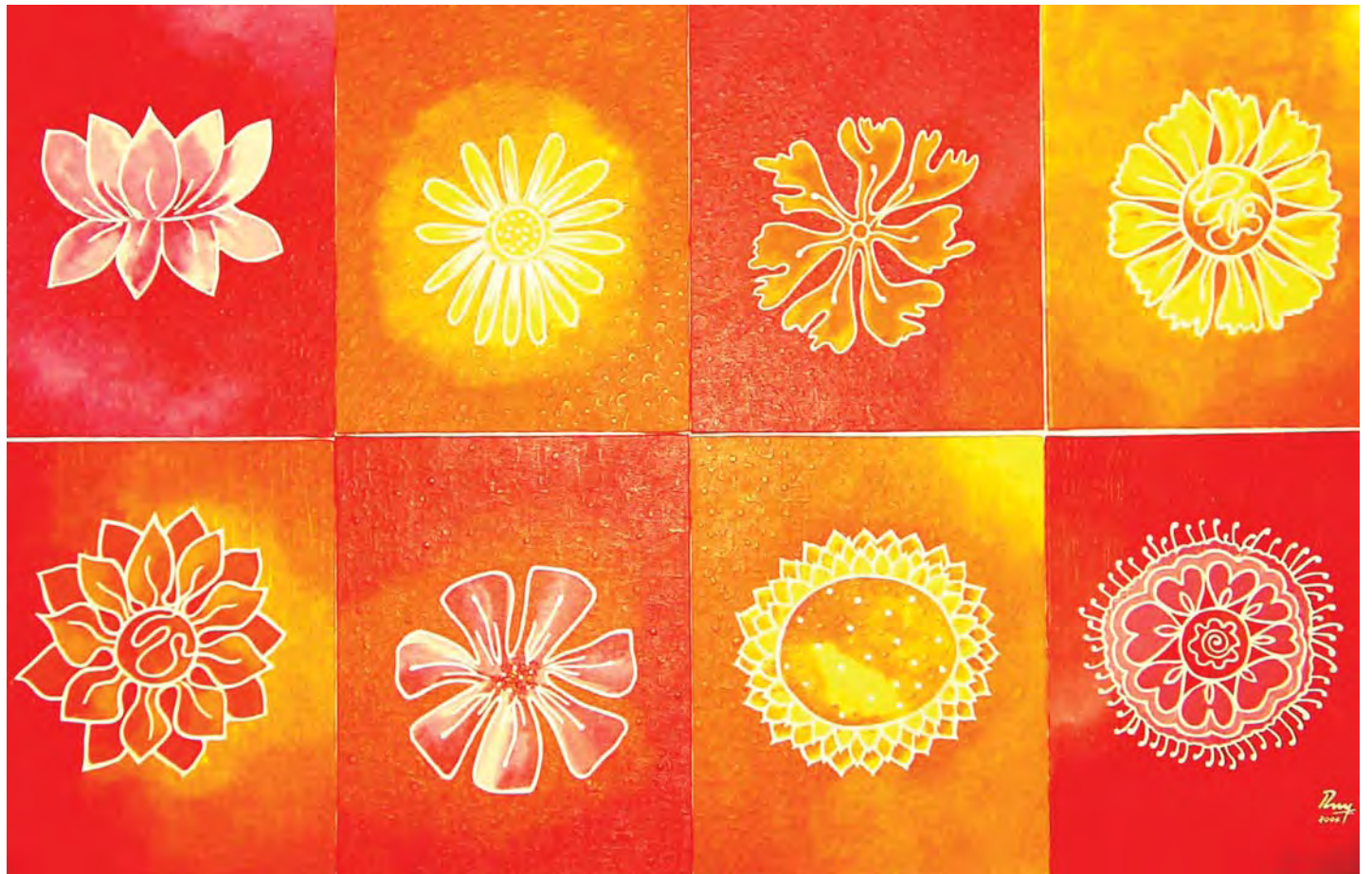
# Flowers and leaves

Flowers and Leaves are eight panelled canvas boards 10"x12" done with acrylics and texture white. Many paintings have been done in these series. I must say that this series have sold out and there is a demand for more of a similar kind of art work. Presently I am working on four entirely different flowers and leaves.

The inspiration for these pieces initially came from the years I had spent in the beautiful islands of The Republic of Seychelles. They were highlighted due to the fact that there was very little flora as compared to an abundance of foliage which comes in various hues of the spectrum, much to my delight.

The foliage in Seychelles is remarkable and spectacular to behold. One cannot but help notice the element of surprise when one becomes aware of the fact, for the colourful foliage more than makes up for the lack of flowers.

(Sanchita, 44, painter and writer currently works from her studio at Gurgaon, Haryana, India. She can be reached at: cell: 91-9818803916, sanchitasroy@gmail.com)



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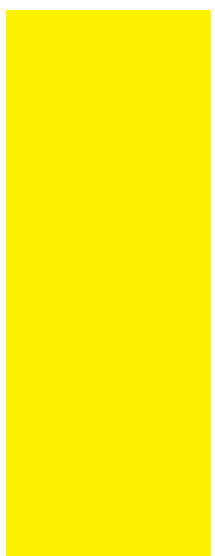
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# Musharraf steals the show

## but victory hangs on court

President Gen Pervez Musharraf on Saturday won a one-sided election for another five-year term from a truncated parliamentary electoral college amid boycotts and protests while the fate of the 55 per cent votes cast for him by his own loyalists, still lay in the hands of the Supreme Court.

As only a few votes were cast against him in what were left as opposition-less two houses of parliament and four provincial assemblies and for a symbolic rival, there was partial strike in some cities and towns while lawyers held protests against Gen Musharraf's disputed candidacy.

He got 384 votes, or 55 per cent, of the 702-vote, but 1,170-member electoral college, which was hugely depleted by resignations by most opposition parties earlier this week and a last-minute walkout by the People's Party Parliamentarians (PPP), the largest opposition party, despite a controversial National Reconciliation Ordinance he issued on Friday to meet some of its demands for a smooth transition to full democracy.

Of them, 252 votes came from 257 polled in a joint meeting of the 342-seat National Assembly and the 100-seat Senate in Islamabad, after three ballot papers were cancelled, and the rest from the provincial assemblies calculated on a proportional representation formula that gives each of them, despite their varying strengths, votes equal to the lowest 65 of

the Balochistan Assembly.

Former Supreme Court judge Wajihuddin Ahmed, who stood as only a symbolic rival, as did PPP chairman Makhdoom Amin Fahim, to be able to pose legal challenges to Gen Musharraf's candidature before the Election Commission and then to the Supreme Court, got a total of five votes -- two from the two houses of parliament and, according to the calculation formula, one each from the Punjab (against three members), Sindh (against two members) and the NWFP (against two members).

No vote was cast for Mr Fahim and a covering PPP candidate, Mrs Faryal Talpur, after the party said it was "abstaining" from the process -- rather than resigning like other parties grouped in the All Parties Democratic Movement (APDM) alliance -- in what was actually a boycott on the ground the president was standing while continuing as army chief.

It was the first time in 60 years of Pakistan's life that an army chief was elected president. The country's first military ruler Mohammad Ayub Khan became an un-retiring field marshal but handed over to General Mohammad Musa as army commander-in-chief before his 1964 election from a 40,000-strong electoral college of Basic Democrats while the second, General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, got himself elected through a controversial referendum as did General Musharraf for his present term in 2002.



Chief Election Commissioner Qazi Mohammad Farooq announced what is called as unofficial count of vote held at the parliament house in Islamabad from 10am to 3pm, to cheers and "President Musharraf Zindabad" slogans from about 40 ruling coalition members who were still present there with Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Pakistan Muslim League President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, although a Supreme Court bench has forbidden a formal notification of the winner until it finally rules over petitions challenging General Musharraf's candidacy.

The 10-member bench had refused pleas from the lawyers of Mr Fahim and Mr Wajihuddin on Friday to stay the election before adjourning the hearing of their petitions until Oct 17.

(Dawn)



# Burma dragnet still spread

More than a week after crushing a peaceful, monk-led rebellion, the Burmese junta continues to arrest and interrogate alleged participants in the anti-regime revolt, state media acknowledged Sunday.

On Saturday, authorities rounded up another 78 "abetters" to the protests, which rocked Rangoon from September 18-25, peaking with 100,000 monks and laymen followers in the streets of

the former capital, said The New Light of Myanmar, a government mouthpiece. Of the 78 detainees, six were later released. Of the estimated 2,700 people, including 533 monks, authorities have arrested over the last 10 days about 1,600 have already been released, including some 400 monks, state media claims.

The numbers cannot be verified because the military rulers have not allowed an independent agency to conduct an investigation into the

atrocities committed last month. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been blocked for months from making prison visits in the country. The military claims that only 10 people died in the crackdown, but Burmese activists claim the total death toll was closer to 200, citing witness accounts of mass cremations following the mayhem and a steady flow of corpses from Rangoon's notorious Insein prison.

Burma's so-called "saffron

revolt," named for the saffron robes worn by Buddhist monks, was crushed on September 26-27 by Burmese anti-riot police and soldiers.

The crackdown has outraged world opinion and strengthened international pressure on the regime to initiate a dialogue with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the world's only jailed Nobel peace laureate.

(Bangkok Post)

# Moving toward peace in Korea

■ Dorothy Ogle

After six years of a failed U.S./North Korea policy that put us on a slippery slope toward nuclear proliferation, news that North Korea pledged to detail its nuclear programs and disable all activities at its main reactor complex by year's end, then signed a wide-ranging reconciliation pact with South Korea promising to work for peace on the divided peninsula has brought a ray of hope to Korea and the whole world.

The name calling ("axis of evil") and "shock and awe" bombings in Iraq convinced North Korea that they could not give up their nuclear program without assurances of their security and consideration of their economic needs. President Bush's 2001 refusal to support South Korea's policy of constructive engagement with the north, and his stubborn refusal to talk directly to the North Koreans, provoked North Korea into expelling the international inspectors, produce more nuclear material, and to prove to the world that they could test a missile and a nuclear bomb.

After six years of failure, President Bush finally was convinced that sanctions could not work, and bombing North Korea was unthinkable. He allowed his faithful negotiator Christopher Hill to



have serious direct talks with the North Koreans, resulting in this new agreement.

It is important for us to think about the second part of last week's news -- the summit between North Korean Leader and South Korean President Rho Moo Hyun. For Koreans, this promises more hope for bringing peace to their divided country. Korea was one country for thousands of years until it was divided 62 years ago by the United States and the USSR in a hasty power-sharing decision at the end of World War II. Koreans had nothing to do with the division of their country, and it has brought them separation of 10 million family members, war, dictatorships, and sacrifice for military build-up that has made their small country one of the most dangerous places in the whole world.

After enduring more than a quarter of a century of military dictatorship, South Koreans in 1987 succeeded in restoring democratic government by peaceful revolution. For several decades the South Korean people and their leaders have realized that peace and prosperity can only come to Korea if the Korean War is ended and the resources of both parts of Korea can be used for the people. They elected two presidents who ran on the platform of bringing peace and reconciliation to Korea by constructive engagement with North Korea.

Former South Korean President Kim Dae Jung won the Nobel Peace Prize for his historic 2000 summit visit to the north where the two Kims agreed on ways to cooperate. President Clinton cooperated with the constructive engagement policy, and as a sign of good will he sent Secretary of State Albright to North Korea. He also invited a high-ranking North Korean military general to the White House. During the Clinton administration, North Korea's nuclear program was under control of international inspectors.

In spite of the last six dark years of U.S./North Korea nuclear stand-off, the two Koreas have cooperated in the development of an industrial park, tourism, a railroad line across the border and marching together in Olympic ceremonies.

This second summit had to be postponed because of the nuclear issues, but it was a priority for South Korean President Rho Moo Hyun, who is coming to the end of his term. The first Korean president to travel to Pyongyang by car, he got out and walked across the Military Demarcation Line. South Korea set up a monument at the border with a stone with the words, "The Road to Peace and Prosperity," handwritten by President Rho to show his commitment to the summit.

After receiving rapturous cheers from hundreds of thousands of North Koreans, President Rho received a more reserved welcome from North Korean President Kim Jong Il. Rho expressed his concern for damage from the recent floods, and Kim Jong Il expressed his appreciation for the symbolism of Rho's walking across the Military Demarcation Line. At the top of Rho's agenda is a Korean Peninsula peace arrangement formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War.

(Daily Camera)





■ Elsbeth Wetzel

# Child friendly authority

If parents misuse their power over their children, when they grow up they retain a distorted view of authority, resulting in a lack of self-confidence.

If you ask what authority really is, you will find yourself confronted with a surrealistic aspect that is unclear, confusing and contradictory. The history of literature for example, differentiates between personal authority and governmental authority. No matter if we live east or west, we are confronted at some point in our lives with one or both of these forms of authority. There is however a world of difference in the implementation of these forms. My interest lays with the significance of authority in education and raising children. I have collected a few ideas on this subject, gathered from my experience.

Parents generally have more knowledge than their children. The older one gets, the more knowledge one acquires. However, older people, although they have more knowledge do not necessarily have more wisdom.

When a child is born, its first experience is the positive stimulation of warmth and food. As the child grows and develops, its cognisant capabilities grow as well. It learns how to interact with others. During this time of development, the child as an individual is ignorant, so it needs to be educated - not simply taught ABC and 123 but also social skills and cultural appreciation. For all that the child needs guidance.

In many cases I have seen the



personality of the child lost when the parents place school education as a priority over social integration and cultural appreciation.

Authority is based on competence and power over the subject. If parents misuse their power over the child, when the child grows up it retains a distorted view of authority,

resulting in a lack of self-confidence.

Responsible parents who themselves have self-confidence are able to explain the difference between right and wrong in a positive way. Without this guidance, the child will lose its orientation in society, and will have difficulty functioning in this complicated world. On the other hand, authority

should not be dictatorial. Authoritarian education creates anxiety and a lack of self-confidence in a child. Children feel instinctively if parents are abusing their authority, or are simply acting in the child's best interest.

How can we deal with our children, without abusing our authority? Here

are a few ways: Parents should use their authority without exercising power over the child. They should listen to the child, taking his/her ideas seriously and then the child will listen to them. Parents should not set goals that are impossible for the child to reach; Parents should admit their own mistakes and should express their wishes in a normal tone of voice. Parents should stand by what they say and should correct their children sparingly.

Children should have a voice in family matters, as much as possible. There are however, decisions that only parents can make. The role we play as parents or teachers or indeed anybody who deals with children, is very important. Children look to us for guidance, and can tell if our authority is rooted in self-confidence or not. The goal of authority is always the same - to prepare the child to find his or her own way in the world. The mature individual is able to physically leave his or her mother and father, but carries them forever inside themselves.

There are cultural differences everywhere but I think we all want to do our best for our children. I wish everyone who deals with children strength, understanding and love. Raising them is one of the most important works of our life.

*(Elsbeth is a child psychologist based in Zurich, Switzerland)*



# Marshland Flowers

A lot of spiritual principles are based on circular logic rather than simple linear logic alone.

■ Acharya Mahayogi Sridhar Rana Rinpoche

Today physics is undergoing a basic change, the most characteristic trait of which is a return to its original self limitation. This is the beginning of post modernism which began because of the cognitive revolution that took place in the mid 20th century. When research was done on cognition, new facts came into light which implied that the empirical positivism is true but not the whole truth says Ken Wilber.

What began to be discovered was that, the so called objective observation of the world out there was not free from the observer (mind) and in fact we saw what the observer mind posited out there. The art psychologist Jerome Bruner and Leo Postman conducted an amusing demonstration experiment of this point. A series of cards were tachistoscopically presented to observers - giving observers only milliseconds of exposure to the display of the cards and increasing exposure to the display of the cards and increasing exposure successively. The display consisted of both normal playing cards and ones in which colour and suit were reversed - a red six of club for example. It was found that observers somehow corrected the wrong coloured playing cards and saw what the mind expected rather than what was out there.

Thus the world out there is not as objective

as modernism would like to think but depends a lot on the observing mind. Now this opens up a whole new weltanschauung. That is, there are many ways to understand/experience/ interpret/give meaning to the world and that no one particular view/meaning/ interpretation is more true/factual/real than any other. And this is the essence of the post modern thinking. A new logic called the modal logic came into existence.

Jerome Bruner says in his book, Actual Mind Possible Worlds,..... In the new, more powerful modal logic, we ask of a proposition not whether it is true or false, but in what kind of possible world it would be true. Jerome further says..... Both science and the humanities have come to be appreciated as artful figments of men's minds, as creation produced by different uses of mind.

The world of Milton's "Paradise Lost" (or Bhanubhakta's Alkapuri) and the world of Newton's Principia exist not only in the minds of men; each has an existence in an 'objective world' of culture - what the science philosopher Karl Popper calls the world three.

Robert Ornstein and many others brought out the fact the human brain was divided into two halves and each half more or less dealt with two different modes of knowing. (Robert

Ornstein: The Metaphoric Mind/ The Nature of Human Consciousness) These two modes were named, the metaphoric mind and the analytic mind. The left brain is linked with the right side of the body and with logic, analytical thinking, science, mathematics, linear thinking.

Linear thinking means thinking in a straight line like  $2 + 2 = 4$  etc. But linear thinking is neither the only mode of giving meaning to the world nor is it the most accurate/correct/true mode. The right half of the brain is linked with the entire left half of the body and is also linked with what is called metaphoric thinking. Metaphoric thinking is linked with music, poetics, art, love, compassion, empathy, sympathy etc. It could also be called the intuitive mode. And spiritual experiences are based on this mode. Insight, which is the most used English translation for Vipassana, does not depend on analytical linear thinking but rather on metaphoric thinking.

An experiment was conducted in New York for kindergarten children when they were asked to tick-mark the correct answer to the question: Birds eat seeds and seeds eat birds. It was amazingly found that the vast majority of the children tick marked seeds eat birds. The experimenter thought that perhaps the children did not understand the question, so

the experiment was done again with explanation of the question. But the result was still the same.

After a lot of thinking the professors who conducted the experiment realised what the children had easily realised that it was equally true that seeds ate birds. When the birds die, they do fall on the ground and became compost for the seeds to eat. That birds eat seed is linear thinking which is correct but it is equally true that seeds eat bird - but that logic is not linear logic but circular logic. Circular logic is also equally valid and true. A lot of spiritual principles are based on circular logic rather than simple linear logic alone. Now let us go back to Ken Wilber.

The philosophic content of a science is only preserved if science is conscious of its limits. Great discoveries of the properties of individual phenomena are possible only if the nature of the phenomena is not generalised a priori. Only by leaving open the question of the ultimate essence of a body, of matter, of energy, etc., can physics reach an understanding of the individual properties of the phenomena that we designate by these concepts, an understanding which alone may lead us to real philosophical insight. *(To be continued.)*

*(Sridhar Rinpoche is a Vajrayana Master)*



# Treasures of Changu

The main image is a 5th century beheaded Vishnu that is believed to sweat miraculously from time to time

Changu Narayan stands on a hillock at an altitude of 1,541 metres, four km north of Bhaktapur. This World Heritage Site houses, among other wonders, a beheaded statue of Vishnu in the main sanctuary. The temple is replete with cultural and archeological significance. Glorious woodcarving, stone carving and metalwork have enriched this Vishnu shrine and made it a veritable museum.

The inscription on the pillar by King Manadeva in 454 AD, is the oldest proven evidence in the valley. The name Changu may have been derived from Newari words: either from Chan and Gu (lasi forest) or Cha Gu (beheaded) relating to the beheaded Vishnu image.

King Amsuvarma contributed greatly to the temple in 7th century. The temple has experienced destructions by earthquakes and fires many times in its history. Monarchs of different dynasties made contributions to the temple. Although the present form of temple dates to early 18th century, rebuilt by King Bhaskar Malla of Kathmandu after a fire, there are many important sculptures dating back to the early Lichhavi period.

An example of classically proportionate pagoda temple, the two storied Changu Narayan is dedicated to Vishnu, the preserver and one of the three supreme gods in Hindu trinity. The main image is the 5th century beheaded Vishnu. It is believed to sweat miraculously from time to time, indicating that Vishnu is still ferociously engaged in battle against Naga or snake spirits. Nitya pujas (ritual worshipping) are held regularly in the temple.

The Torana above the main door depicts Vishnu in his Sridhara mudra (earth touching posture), a stereotypical Nepali appearance for Vishnu holding the four emblems – Shankha (conch), Chakra (eternal wheel), Gada (mace) and Padma (lotus) in his four hands. Older shrines dating back to 2nd or 3rd century of Chhinna Masta (beheaded Kali), Laxmi (Vishnu's consort and the goddess of wealth), Shiva and Sapta matrikas (seven holy mothers) are seen on the southwest corner near the entrance. A 6th century image of Garuda, Vishnu's transport, is seen kneeling. It is believed Manadeva himself is portrayed in the form of Garuda. Stone lions, like almost all shrines in Nepal,



■ Pramesh Pradhan



## HERITAGE SITES



**Changu Narayan is one of the places for chronicle observation of cultural development of Kathmandu valley since past 2000 years.**

guard the temple. An interesting 11th century image of Narsingha (man-lion) tearing down demon Hiranyakasipu is an added attraction. Narsingha is the fourth of Vishnu's ten incarnations. A richly carved Vishnu-vikranta or Tri-vikram is an 8th century image. The six armed dwarf is shown transformed into a giant, capable of crossing the universe in three gigantic strides. Bamana (dwarf) is the fifth incarnation of Vishnu. Demon king Bali is shown outwitted by Vishnu disguised as a dwarf.

Vishworupa, the 8th century image, is perhaps the most meaningful found anywhere in Nepal. It shows Krishna in Mahabharat elucidating Gita to Arjun. Three levels represent three Hindu worlds – Akash (sky), Patal (nether world) and Sworga (heaven). Multi-dimensionally meaningful images of Hindu mythology relate snake with water, women with earth, four elephants with four cardinal directions and ten heads with ten religious directions.

Images of Garudasana Narayan, wonderfully carved doors, windows, four emblems in four corners of the temple, statues of king Bhupatendra Malla and queen Bhubanaxmi are seen kneeling for worship in a gilded cage in front of the temple. For Buddhists, Changu Narayan is Haribahana Lokeswar - a Bodhisattva, Kileswar Shiva - Samantabhadra Lokeswar and Garuda - Takshaka, the king of serpent.

Changu Narayan is one of the places for chronicle observation of cultural development of Kathmandu valley since past 2000 years. Changu Narayan has a spectacular vantage point to watch Manohara river moving through the green fields, to view the exploding city below and to enjoy the mountains in the north.

Despite the temple's beauty and significance, it attracts relatively few visitors. Comparative difficulty in accessibility and the lone road connection are perhaps the reasons. Improved transportation and accommodation facilities would ensure more visitors and tourists to this visit-worthy site that offers hiking, a multi-rewarding activity in terms of culture and faith, natural sightseeing and of course, physical exercise.

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# Chaos in Burma



■ Yuyutsu RD Sharma

*On the road to Mandalay, where Buddhist monks march and pray*

*With their begging bowls turned upside down, Their fear of reprisal flung to the ground, a brutal regime strains to hold sway.*

*Yet in the grim face of tyranny, it is the Sangha, and the people, who must seize the day.*

*On the streets of Rangoon, even yesteryear was not too soon*

*For those murderous generals to be thoroughly swept away.*

**- Eddie Woods, "Mandalay"**

The chaos in South Asia holds the world's attention. The Burmese stance seems to speak for the region. Everyday we receive angry emails from the friends abroad saying: Burma is burning and monks are marching to save the truth and democracy. What are you doing? Here is how the American poet Eddie Woods responds from Amsterdam in an e-mail:

"We're concerned about Burma, right? But no one can do anything except talk and make useless threats. The UN, the EU, the USA, UK etc sanction travel restrictions but the generals don't care. They never did, they're not going to now. The nation is in pain and the people are dying."

It's the average individual that seems to be more fearsome than crafty political parties' networks. It's the people's anguish that seems to shake the citadels of tyranny in the region. The simplicity of the common people remains the weapon that can challenge atrocious regimes. People all over the world seem to relish such civil uprising. Probably the resolve of the people who are not politically opinioned seem to hold the key to the continent's peace.

Is this the fate Nepal has to face in the coming months? Nepal possibly has passed through the phase that Burma seems to be facing. Is Nepal the future of Burma? Is this what happens when you overthrow powerful autocratic rulers? But is that enough?

Would Nepal have another uprising? A civil uprising in Nepal this time? Who would be the monks in Nepal? The average innocent civilians who would march to get rid of political opportunism of the political parties? Would there ever be true democracy in these fragile nations where Rousseau has just taken birth? And how could we forget Gandhi? Eddie Wood's has similar strategy for Burma when he asks civilians to know the facts:

"We know China could do something. But it won't. They do too much business with the corrupt Burmese regime. Nearly two billion dollars' worth annually. More than 400 companies. And Burma's biggest arms supplier (along with India & Russia)."

I see ordinary people in tea stalls and in public places grimly looking at the newspapers. I wait to watch their response but after a brief reading, I see them drop the paper in grim silence and move on.

*Flames of freedom, please prevail! As Burma valiantly seeks to sail*

*Into a new and fragrant dawn. Burma oh Burma, May the spirit of Buddha guide your future forever more.*

**- E. Woods.**

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# Britney's BLACKOUT

With very little in her life going her way, Spears may have finally decided to attempt to

Britney Spears has finally shed some light on the title of her new album.

Jive Records announced Friday that the embattled pop princess had dubbed her forthcoming oeuvre *Blackout*. The album is due for release Nov. 13.

In addition to the chart-topping single "Gimme More," *Blackout* will feature the songs "Heaven on Earth," "Radar," "Piece of Me" and "Break the Ice," per *Billboard*.

The video for "Gimme More" hit iTunes Friday and was due to premiere on MTV's *TRL* Monday. In the video (which was briefly available on YouTube before being yanked), Spears stars as dual versions of herself—a blond-haired good girl curiously watching a brunette bad girl perform a pole-dancing routine.

Despite her success on the singles charts, the past week has been a tough one for Spears.

On Monday, a judge stripped her of custody of her sons, one-year-old Jayden James and two-year-old Sean Preston, turning them over to Kevin Federline full-time.

Though Spears is allowed to visit the boys every other day, her sessions will be observed by a monitor, who has the authority to "terminate visitation immediately if any conduct or action by [Spears] endangers the minor children," according to the judge's order.

The next hearing in the matter is scheduled for Oct. 26.

With very little in her life going her way, Spears may have finally decided to attempt to rebuild her relationship with her estranged family.

According to *People*, the pop star's mother and sister, Lynne and Jamie Lynn Spears, flew from Louisiana to Los Angeles on Friday evening.

"Brit really needed her mom," a source told the magazine. "So, Lynne flew out, and they met."

Perhaps in an attempt to evade the hordes of paparazzi, Lynne reportedly dropped by her daughter's Beverly Hills home at about 3 a.m., then

drove the two of them back to Britney's new Malibu pad.

The mother-daughter duo had a public falling-out in June, when Britney was photographed handing Lynne a document that reportedly warned her to stay away from her grandsons if she had been taking any medication that could impair her judgment.

Despite the bad blood between the two, Lynne has never given up hope of reconciliation.

Ambushed by photographers last week while driving around her hometown of Kentwood, she offered the statement, "I just want to say, I love my daughter very much." ■

# Prashant rocks



▲ Ankita, another finalist, rocking with Prashant.

Prashant, the singer from Darjeeling who was crowned the Indian Idol, performing in a concert in Pokhara.



▲ Deepali, a finalist in Indian Idol- 3, accompanying Prashant.



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